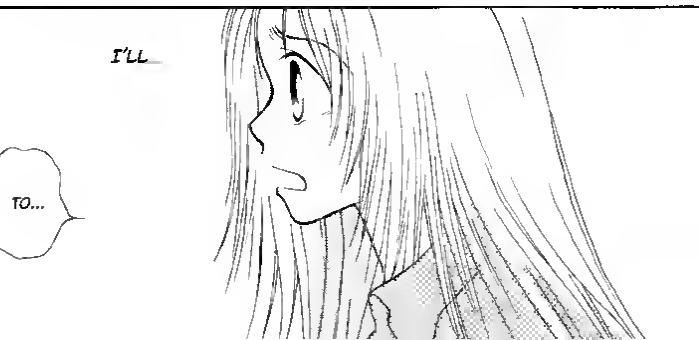
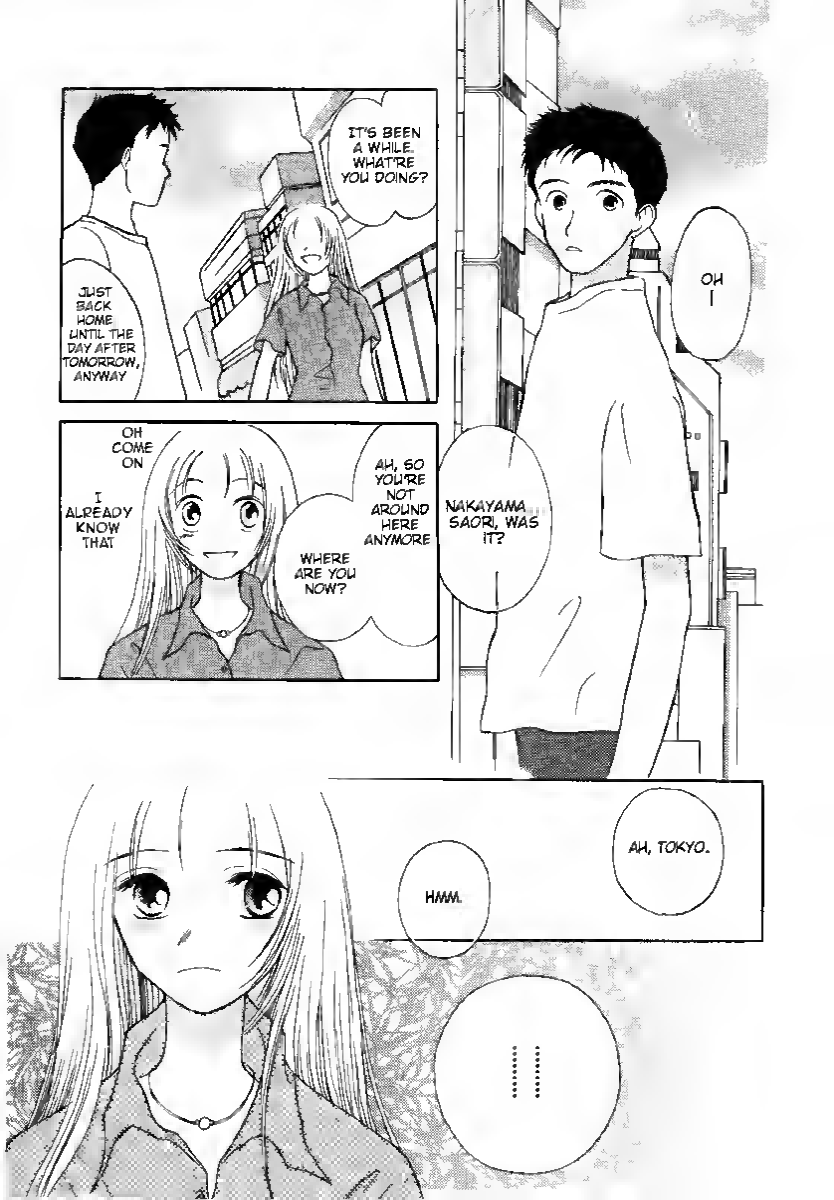
OK, HURRY UP AND SAY
IF I DON'T DO IT
NOW.

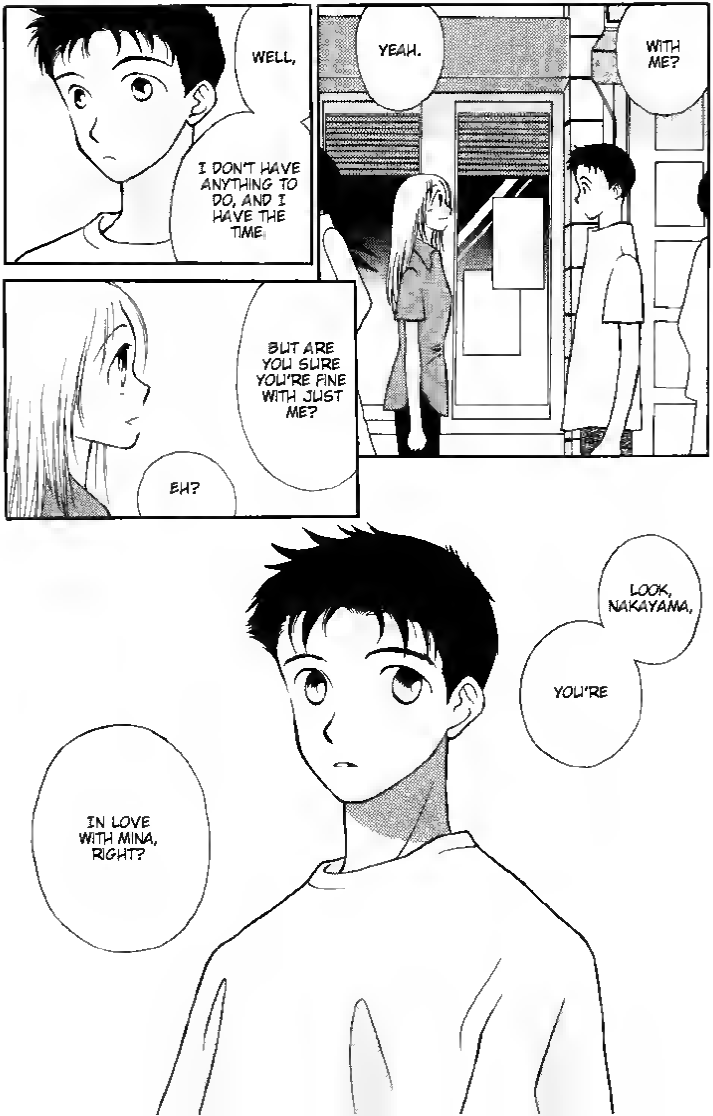

I'LL
TO...

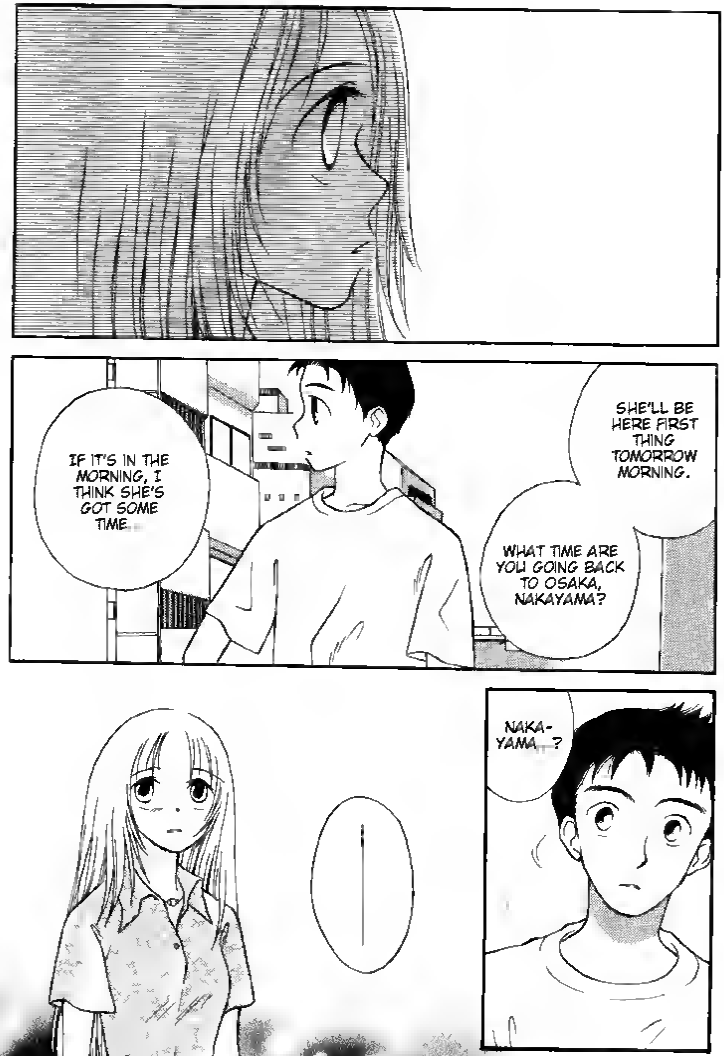
I'LL REGRET IT FOR THE REST OF MY LIFE
TOKITO-KUN!
My Little world

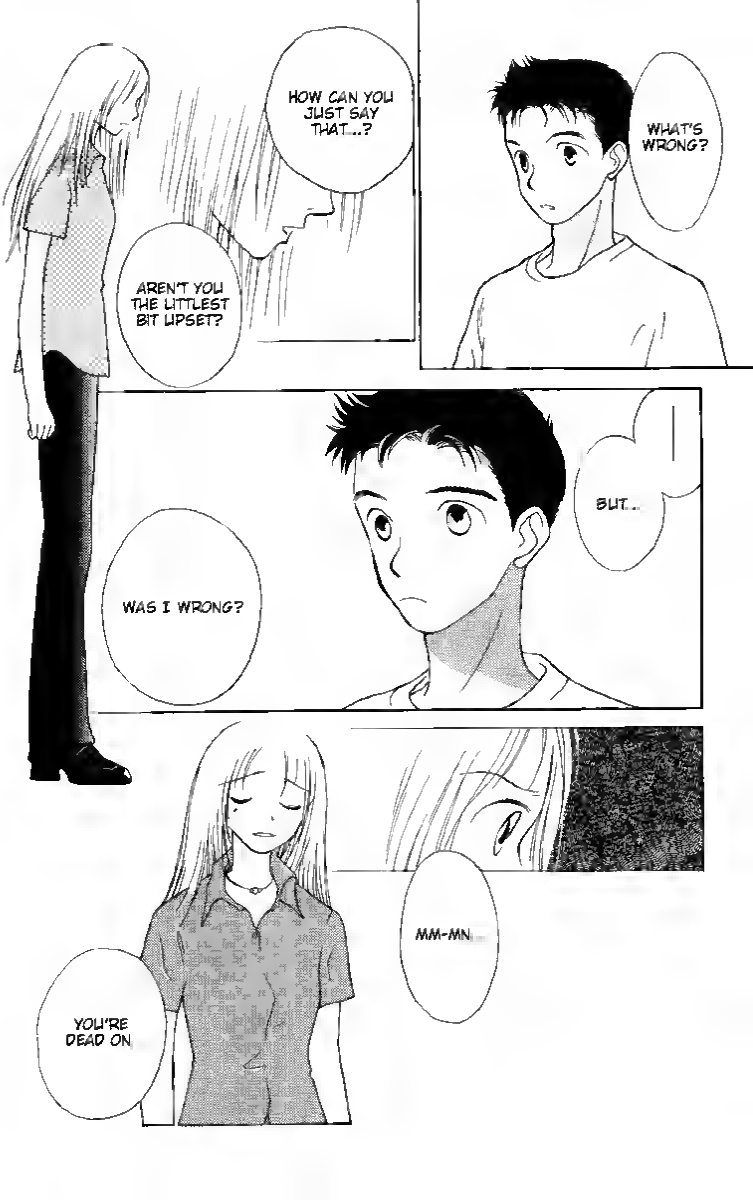

IT'S BEEN A WHILE. WHAT'RE YOU DOING?
JUST BACK HOME UNTIL THE DAY AFTER TOMORROW, ANYWAY
OH COME ON
I ALREADY KNOW THAT
AH, SO YOU'RE NOT AROUND HERE ANYMORE
WHERE ARE YOU NOW?
OH!
NAKAYAMA SAORI, WAS IT?
AH, TOKYO.
HMM.
!!!

AH, MINA?
CALM DOWN
JUST ACT NONCHALANT AND LISTEN
AH,
COME TO THINK OF IT, WHERE'S TASAKI-SAN?
HOW'S SHE DOING? YOU TWO STILL CLOSE?
SHE'S FINE
SHE GRADUATED FROM JUNIOR COLLEGE AND IS ALSO WORKING IN TOKYO.
SHE LIVES PRETTY CLOSE TO MY PLACE NOW.
OH...?
I KNEW IT
THAT SO?
AAH

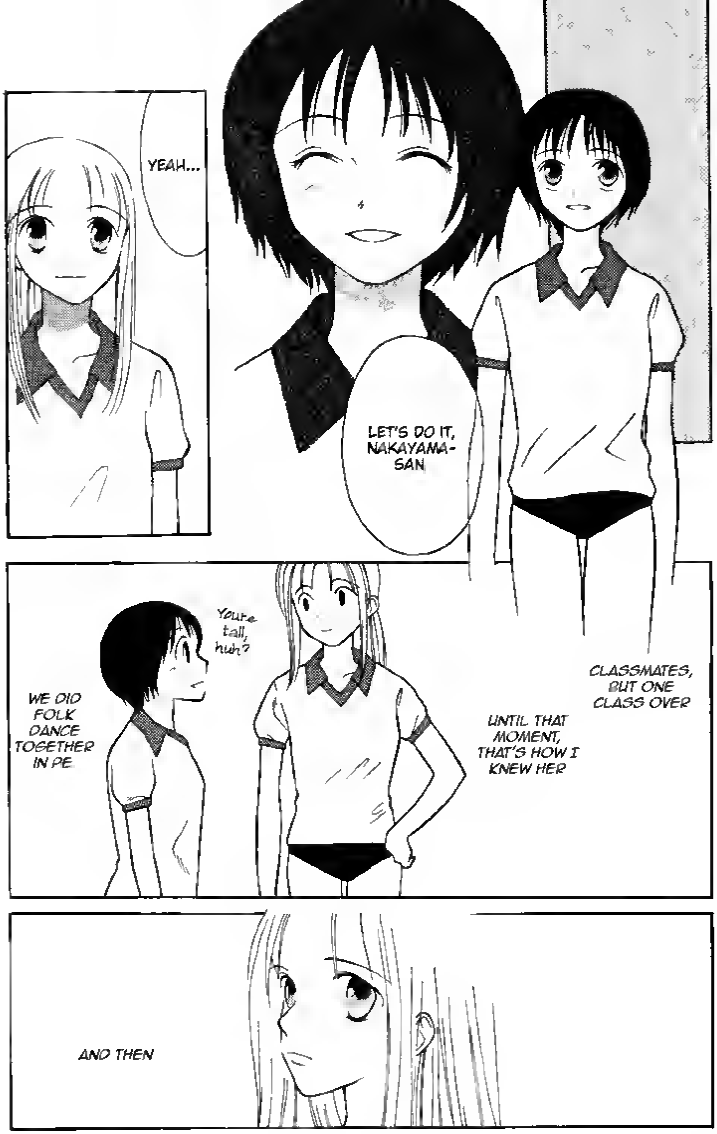
BUT THIS IS GREAT, MEETING AN OLD CLASSMATE HERE IN THE HOME TOWN LIKE THIS
BUT SOMEWHERE IN MY HEART, I STILL WANTED TO PRESERVE SOME CHANCE
I'M GOING BACK TOMORROW.
IT'S NOT LIKE I HAVE TO ASK ABOUT STUFF I ALREADY KNOW
I ALSO MOVED OUT OF PREFECTURE
Osaka
HEY, TOKITO-KUN, YOU HAVE SOME TIME TODAY?
YOU WANNA GO GET SOMETHING TO DRINK?
SO I CAN HAVE MY HEART'S DESIRE FINALLY GRANTED
DON'T BE DISCOURAGED, GO ON AND SAY IT!
JUST DO IT!
EH?


WELL,
I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING TO DO, AND I HAVE THE TIME.
YEAH.
WITH ME?
BUT ARE YOU SURE YOU'RE FINE WITH JUST ME?
EH?
LOOK, NAKAYAMA,
YOU'RE
IN LOVE WITH MINA, RIGHT?

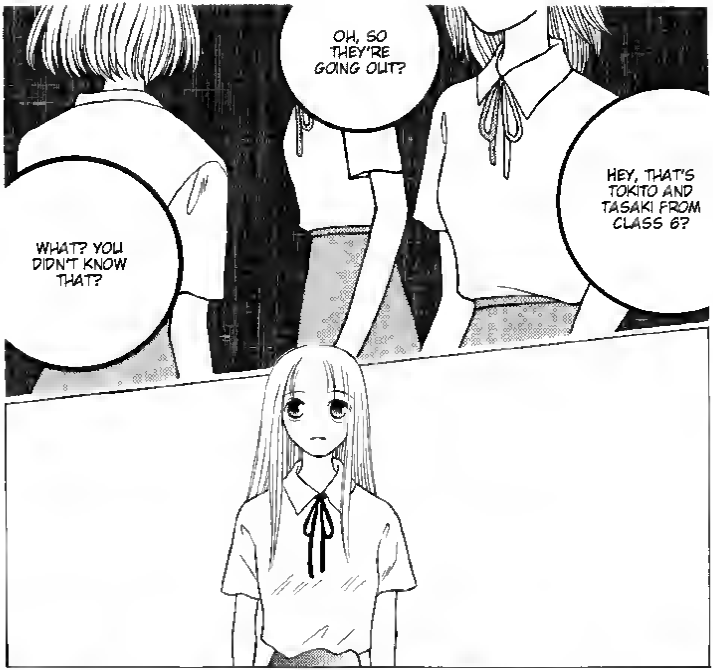

SHE'LL BE HERE FIRST THING TOMORROW MORNING.
WHAT TIME ARE YOU GOING BACK TO OSAKA, NAKAYAMA?
IF IT'S IN THE MORNING, I THINK SHE'S GOT SOME TIME...
NAKA-YAMA...?
I

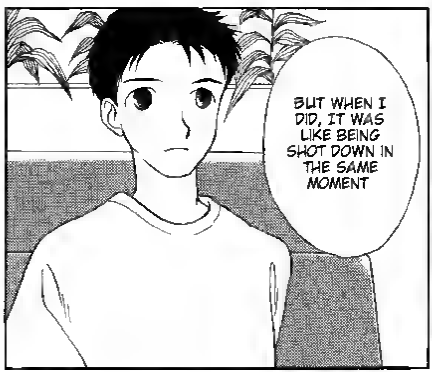

WHAT'S WRONG?
HOW CAN YOU JUST SAY THAT...?
AREN'T YOU THE LITTLEST BIT UPSET?
BUT...
WAS I WRONG?
MM-MN.
YOU'RE DEAD ON.

I'VE ALWAYS LOVED TASAKI MINA.
OH.
WE HAVE MORE GIRLS.
WE'LL NEED TWO OR THREE, UM...
NEMOTO, AND
SAITO.
ALSO NAKA-YAMA.
SORRY, BUT CAN YOU TAKE THE BOY'S SIDE?
OK.

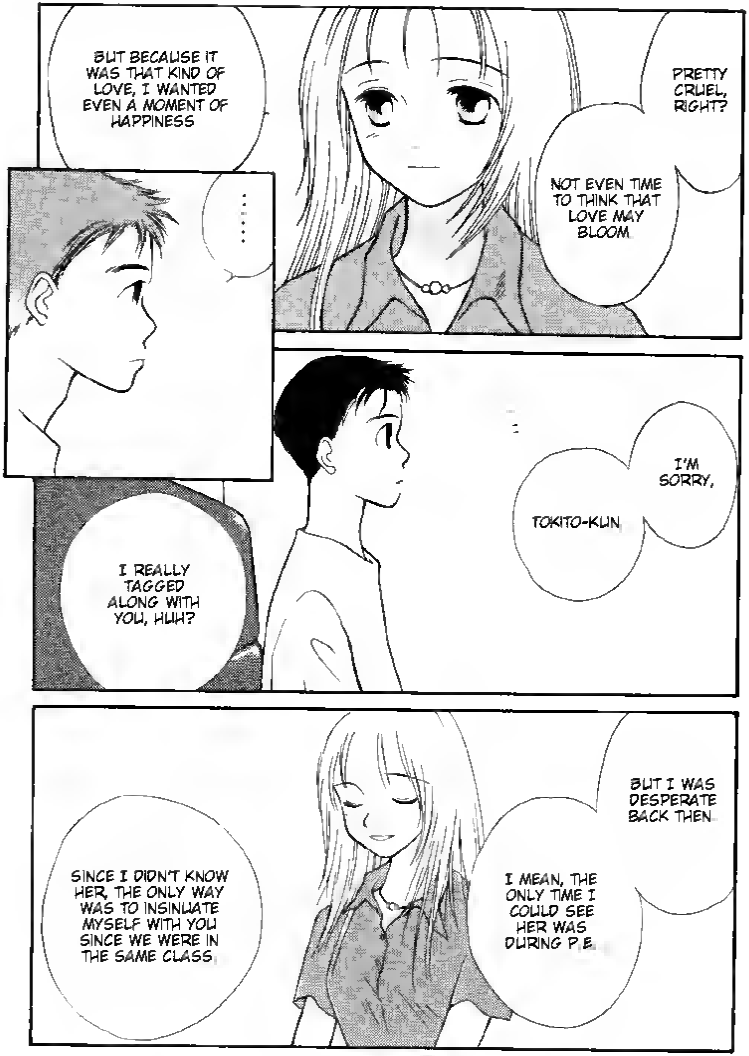

YEAH...
LET'S DO IT, NAKAYAMA-SAN
CLASSMATES, BUT ONE CLASS OVER
UNTIL THAT MOMENT, THAT'S HOW I KNEW HER
You're tall, huh?
WE DID FOLK DANCE TOGETHER IN PE
AND THEN

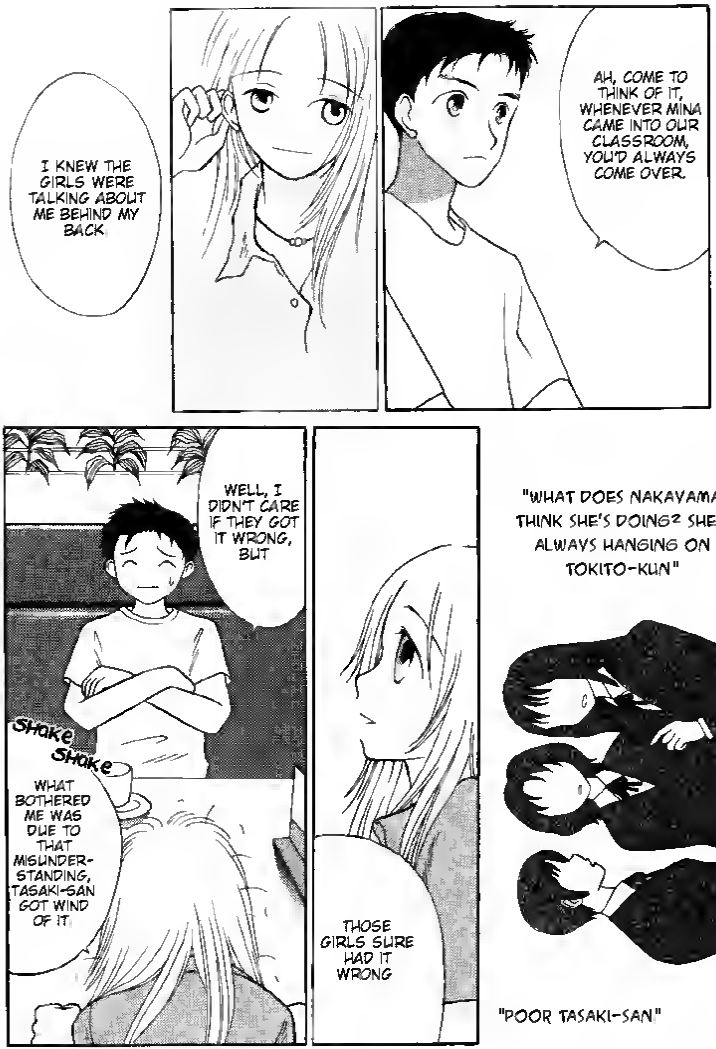
BUT
BUT AT FIRST I PERPLEXED MYSELF
I TRIED SO HARD TO COVER UP MY FEELINGS
BEFORE I KNEW IT, I WAS ALWAYS WATCHING HER

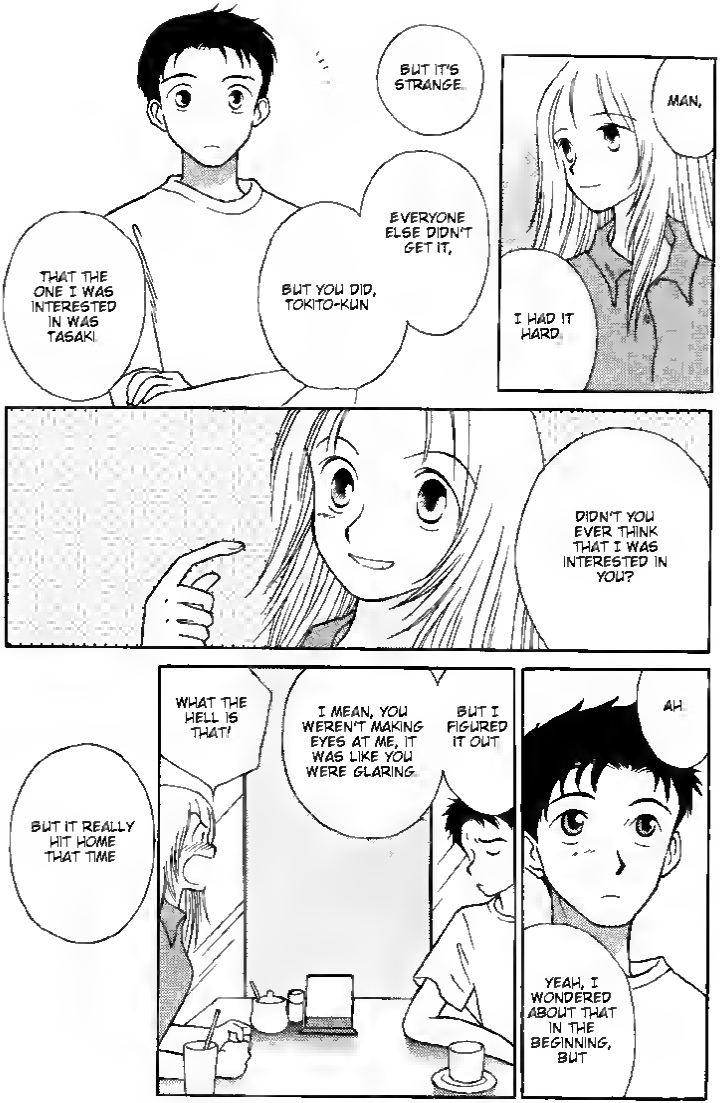

OH, SO THEY'RE GOING OUT?
HEY, THAT'S TOKITO AND TASAKI FROM CLASS 6?
WHAT? YOU DIDN'T KNOW THAT?

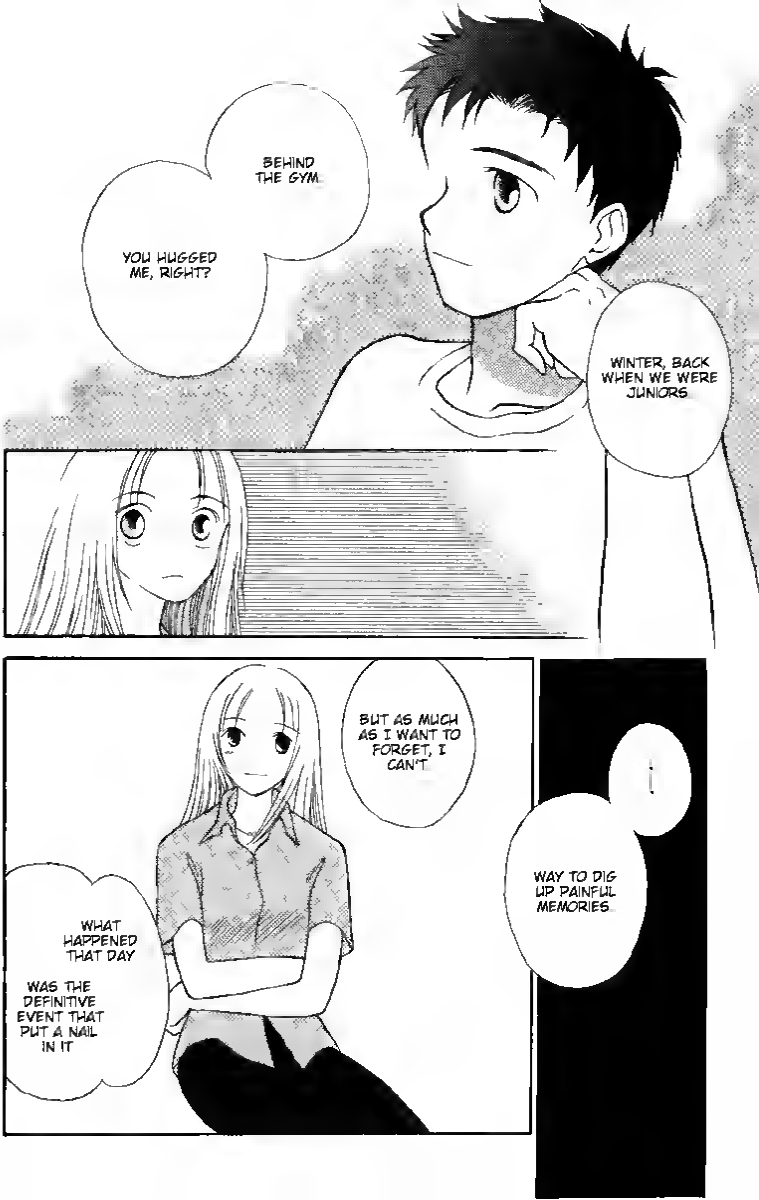

BUT WHEN I DID, IT WAS LIKE BEING SHOT DOWN IN THE SAME MOMENT

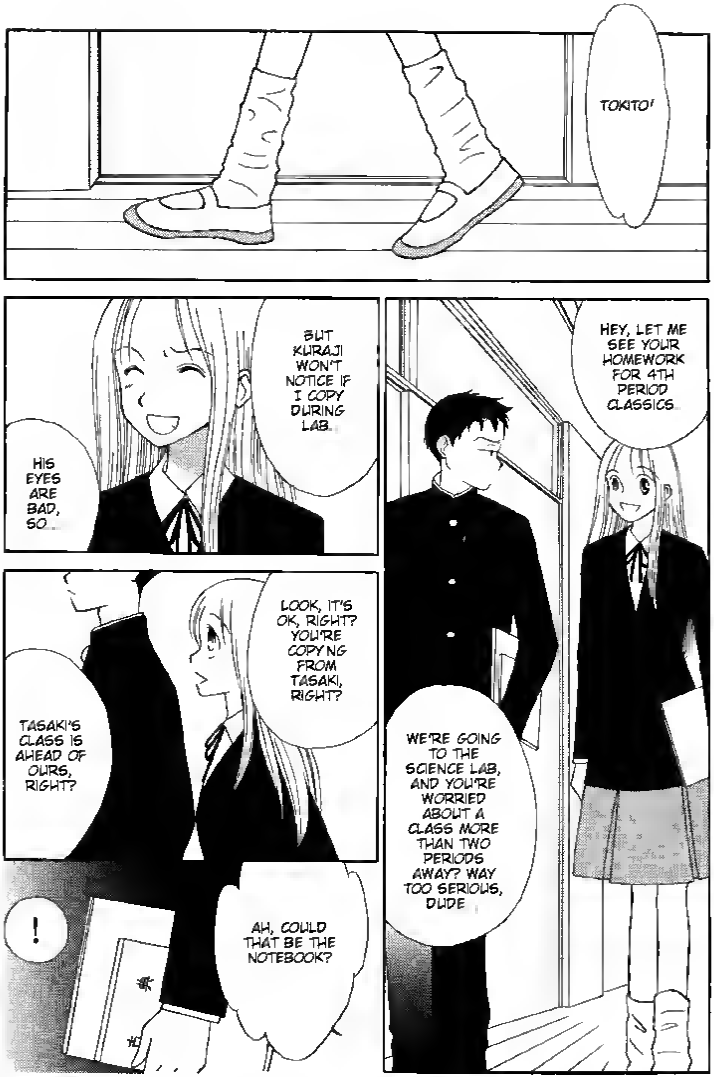
AT THAT TIME,
I FINALLY FIGURED OUT MY REAL FEELINGS.


BUT BECAUSE IT WAS THAT KIND OF LOVE, I WANTED EVEN A MOMENT OF HAPPINESS
PRETTY CRUEL, RIGHT?
NOT EVEN TIME TO THINK THAT LOVE MAY BLOOM
.....
I'M SORRY, TOKITO-KUN
I REALLY TAGGED ALONG WITH YOU, HUH?
BUT I WAS DESPERATE BACK THEN
I MEAN, THE ONLY TIME I COULD SEE HER WAS DURING P.E.
SINCE I DIDN'T KNOW HER, THE ONLY WAY WAS TO INSINUATE MYSELF WITH YOU SINCE WE WERE IN THE SAME CLASS


I KNEW THE GIRLS WERE TALKING ABOUT ME BEHIND MY BACK.
AH, COME TO THINK OF IT, WHENEVER MINA CAME INTO OUR CLASSROOM, YOU'D ALWAYS COME OVER.
WELL, I DIDN'T CARE IF THEY GOT IT WRONG, BUT
Shake Shake
WHAT BOTHERED ME WAS DUE TO THAT MISUNDER-STANDING, TASAKI-SAN GOT WIND OF IT.
THOSE GIRLS SURE HAD IT WRONG
"WHAT DOES NAKAYAMA THINK SHE'S DOING? SHE'S ALWAYS HANGING ON TOKITO-KUN"
"POOR TASAKI-SAN"


BUT IT'S STRANGE.
EVERYONE ELSE DIDN'T GET IT,
BUT YOU DID, TOKITO-KUN
THAT THE ONE I WAS INTERESTED IN WAS TASAKI.
MAN,
I HAD IT HARD.
DIDN'T YOU EVER THINK THAT I WAS INTERESTED IN YOU?
AH.
YEAH, I WONDERED ABOUT THAT IN THE BEGINNING, BUT
BUT I FIGURED IT OUT.
I MEAN, YOU WEREN'T MAKING EYES AT ME, IT WAS LIKE YOU WERE GLARING.
WHAT THE HELL IS THAT!
BUT IT REALLY HIT HOME THAT TIME


BEHIND THE GYM...
YOU HUGGED ME, RIGHT?
WINTER, BACK WHEN WE WERE JUNIORS...
BUT AS MUCH AS I WANT TO FORGET, I CAN'T.
WHAT HAPPENED THAT DAY WAS THE DEFINITIVE EVENT THAT PUT A NAIL IN IT
WAY TO DIG UP PAINFUL MEMORIES...

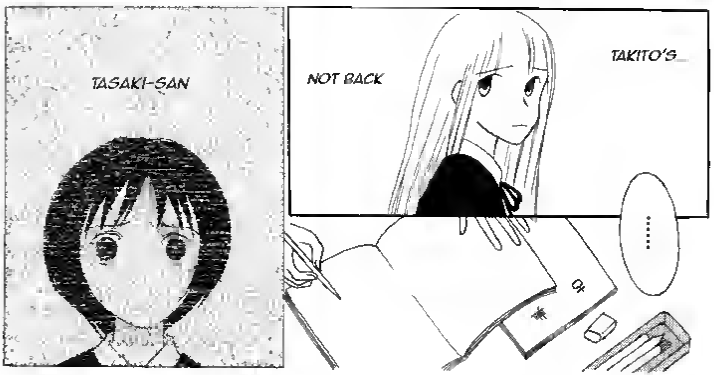

TOKITO!
HEY, LET ME SEE YOUR HOMEWORK FOR 4TH PERIOD CLASSICS.
WE'RE GOING TO THE SCIENCE LAB, AND YOU'RE WORRIED ABOUT A CLASS MORE THAN TWO PERIODS AWAY? WAY TOO SERIOUS, DUDE.
BUT KURAJI WON'T NOTICE IF I COPY DURING LAB.
HIS EYES ARE BAD, SO...
LOOK, IT'S OK, RIGHT? YOU'RE COPYING FROM TASAKI, RIGHT?
TASAKI'S CLASS IS AHEAD OF OURS, RIGHT?
!
AH, COULD THAT BE THE NOTEBOOK?

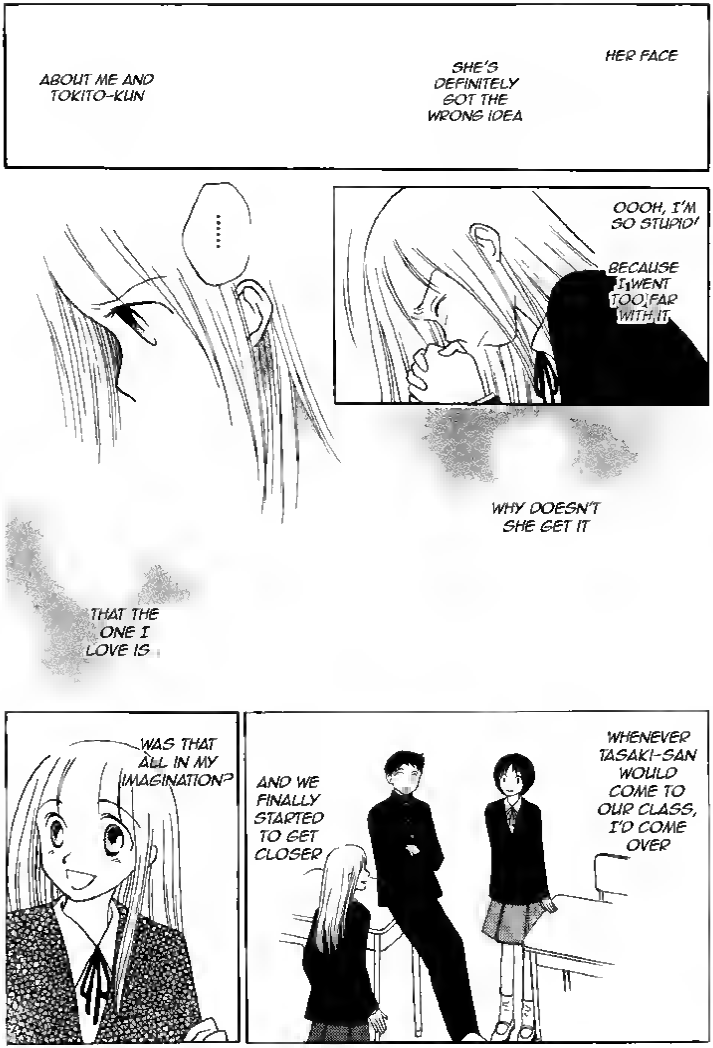
DON'T WORRY! I'LL GIVE IT RIGHT BACK
GIVE IT BACK!
DON'T GIVE ME THAT...
HEY! I HAVEN'T EVEN COPIED THAT!
OH, TOKITO, YOU BAD BOY! YOU'RE DOING THE SAME THING AS ME, HMMM?
LEMME BORROW THIS
HEY!
IF YOU ARE GOING TO DISCUSS COPYING, DO IT AWAY FROM TEACHERS
KU KU KU

!!!!!
I KNOW YOU TWO LOVEBIRDS ARE CLOSE, BUT KEEP IT UNDER WRAPS!
OKAAAY
STOMP STOMP STOMP
THAT'S 'CAUSE YOU WERE ALL YELLING AND STUFF
SEE!? YOU GOT US IN TROUBLE!
WHIP!
!

...?
WHOOSH!
WHISH
TA...

BRIING
?!


TASAKI-SAN
NOT BACK
TAKITO'S...
.....

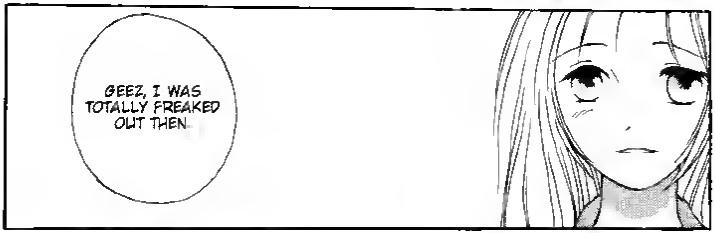

ABOUT ME AND TOKITO-KUN
SHE'S DEFINITELY GOT THE WRONG IDEA
HER FACE
.....
OOOH, I'M SO STUPID!
BECAUSE I WENT TOO FAR WITH IT
WHY DOESN'T SHE GET IT
THAT THE ONE I LOVE IS
WAS THAT ALL IN MY IMAGINATION?
AND WE FINALLY STARTED TO GET CLOSER
WHENEVER TASAKI-SAN WOULD COME TO OUR CLASS, I'D COME OVER

IS TASAKI-SAN REALLY THINKING THE SAME THING AS EVERYONE ELSE IN HER HEART?
THAT'S TOO CRUEL
IF SHE ALWAYS THINKS THAT, THEN
THAT I COULDN'T TELL HER HOW I FEEL
IT'S HARDER THAN IF I WERE DUMPED
I'M GONNA TELL HER!
GLATTER!
!
MY REAL FEELINGS
I'LL SAY IT!
TO HER!
WHOOSH!

AND THEN I SAW IT.
YOU AND
TASAKI-SAN KISSING

……!
…
TH-THUMP
TH-THUMP
TH-THUMP

NAKAYAMA...?


GEEZ, I WAS TOTALLY FREAKED OUT THEN.

RAGE AND SADNESS... AND JEALOUSY. ALL MIXED TOGETHER.
AND

WHEN I HUGGED YOU,
IT WAS LIKE A SURROGATE
ALL THE TIMES TASAKI-SAN HAD HUGGED YOU AND TOUCHED YOU UP 'TILL THEN
I JUST WANTED TO FEEL THAT.
HEH... YOUR FACE BACK THEN.
I CAN STILL REMEMBER IT CLEARLY.
THAT WAS OUR FIRST KISS, Y'KNOW.
THAT I WASN'T THE ONE YOU WERE AFTER
THAT FINALLY CONVINCED ME THAT SOMETHING WAS UP WITH YOU.

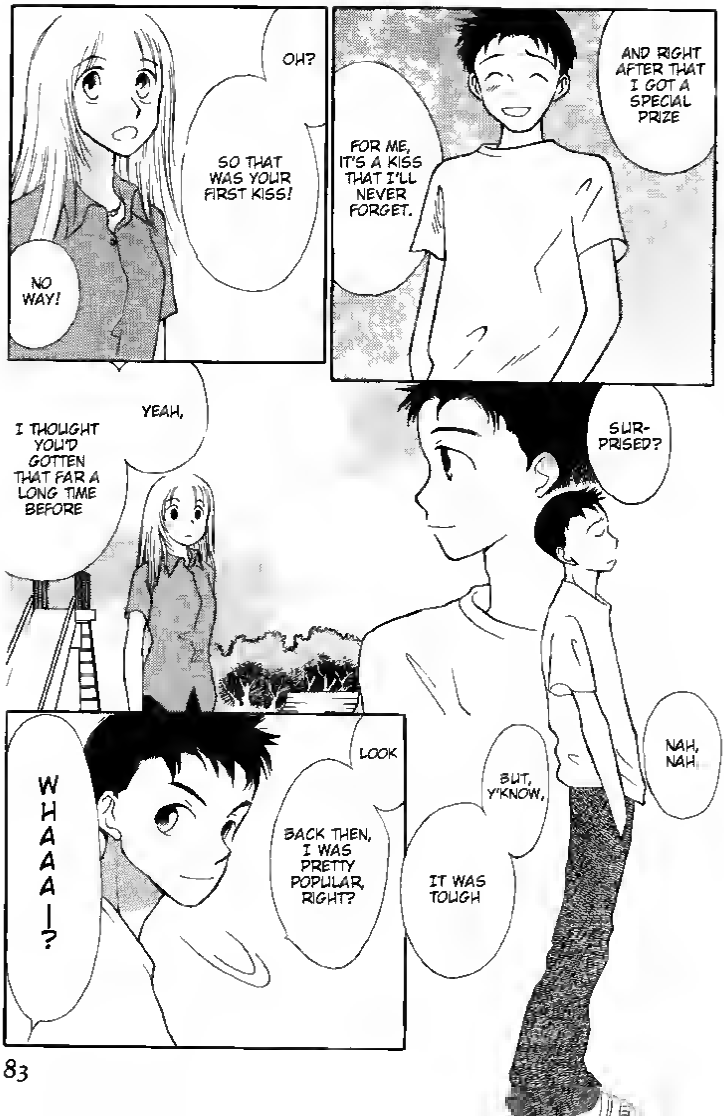
TASAKI!
I SAID WAIT! HEY!
TA .
YOU TWO ARE CLOSE, HUH?
YOU AND NAKAYAMA!
SHE'S ALWAYS BUTTING IN ON OUR CONVERSATIONS RECENTLY
AND YOU ALWAYS SEEM TO ENJOY TALKING TO HER!

OH, FORGET IT!
WHAT!
LOOK, YOU'RE CLOSE TO HER TOO.
"WHATEVER?" WHAT THE HEY, FACE ME!
WHAT-EVER!
FORGET WHAT?
.
.
.
—

..DO YOU LIKE NAKAYAMA-SAN?
ARE YOU STUPID?
NAKAYAMA-SAN LIKES YOU, TOKITO-KUN!
BUT
EH?

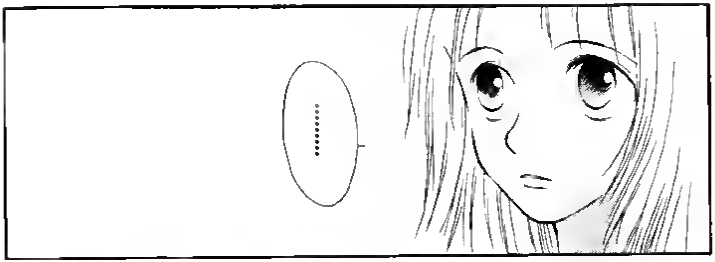
NAKAYAMA-SAN?
ME?
SHE
NAKAYAMA LIKES...
NO...
THAT'S NOT IT.
THE ONE SHE LIKES IS...

MINA
C'MON ALREADY


AND RIGHT AFTER THAT I GOT A SPECIAL PRIZE
FOR ME, IT'S A KISS THAT I'LL NEVER FORGET.
OH?
SO THAT WAS YOUR FIRST KISS!
NO WAY!
YEAH,
I THOUGHT YOU'D GOTTEN THAT FAR A LONG TIME BEFORE
SUR-PRISED?
NAH, NAH
BUT, Y'KNOW,
IT WAS TOUGH
LOOK
BACK THEN, I WAS PRETTY POPULAR, RIGHT?
WHAAA!?

I SEE THAT PISSES ME OFF
Well the first valentine's day after I started high school
TOKITO-KUN
SURE, SURE, WHATEVER YOU SAY
NO, I'M SERIOUS
EVEN THOUGH I'M LIKE THIS, I GOT LOTS OF LOVE LETTERS
HE WAS POPULAR AFTER ALL
THOSE OTHER GIRLS, WHO DIDN'T EVEN HAVE THE COURAGE TO CLING TO HIM, DESPISED ME
SO THAT'S WHY
BUT EVEN SO, SHE'S THE ONLY ONE WHO DIDN'T NOTICE
SHE WAS SERIOUSLY A LATE BLOOMER, AND HAD ZERO INTEREST IN GUYS

!
Here.
LITTLE BY LITTLE, I DID THINGS TO MAKE AN IMPRESSION ON HER
BUT I DID IT SO THAT I DIDN'T SCARE HER OFF
I WAS DESPERATE!
Thanks
SERIOUSLY, THERE WERE ANY NUMBER OF GIRLS HITTING ON ME
I WAS CURSING MYSELF - WHY WOULD I FALL FOR HER OF ALL PEOPLE!?
Totally seems like a waste, right?
.....
clench
WELL, ANYWAY.
THERE'S NO TELLING WHY YOU FALL IN LOVE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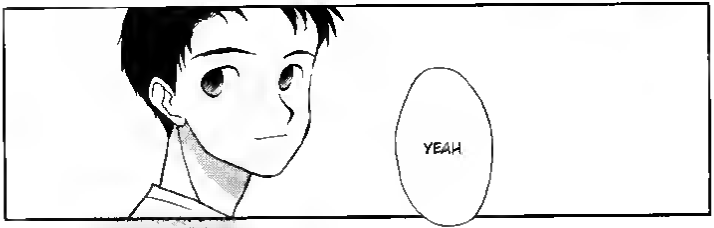
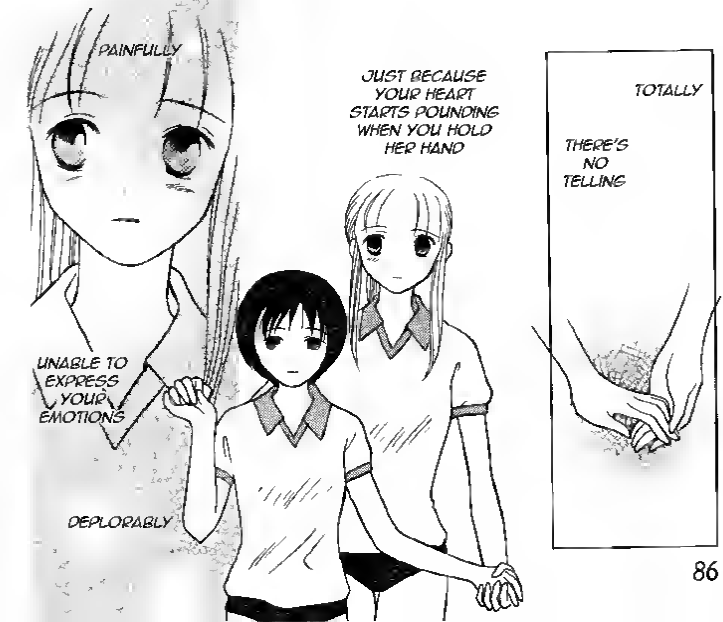
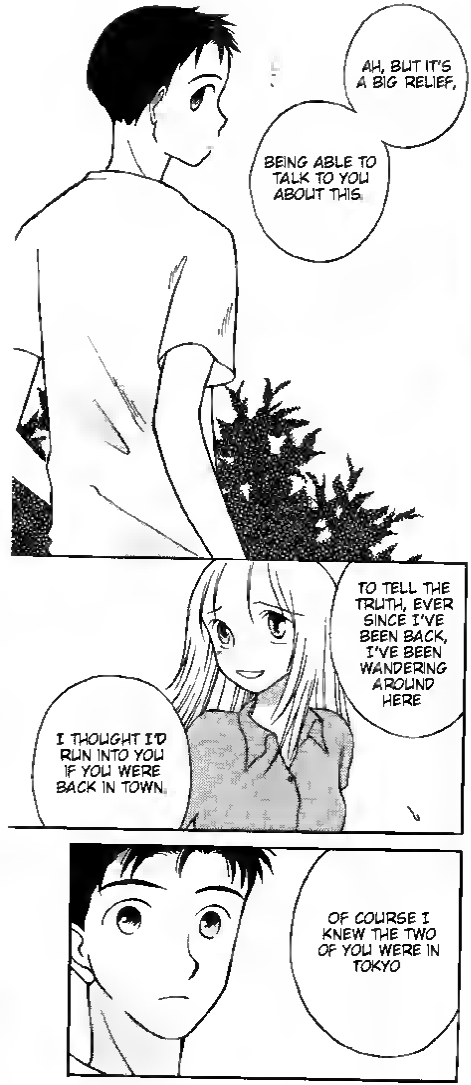
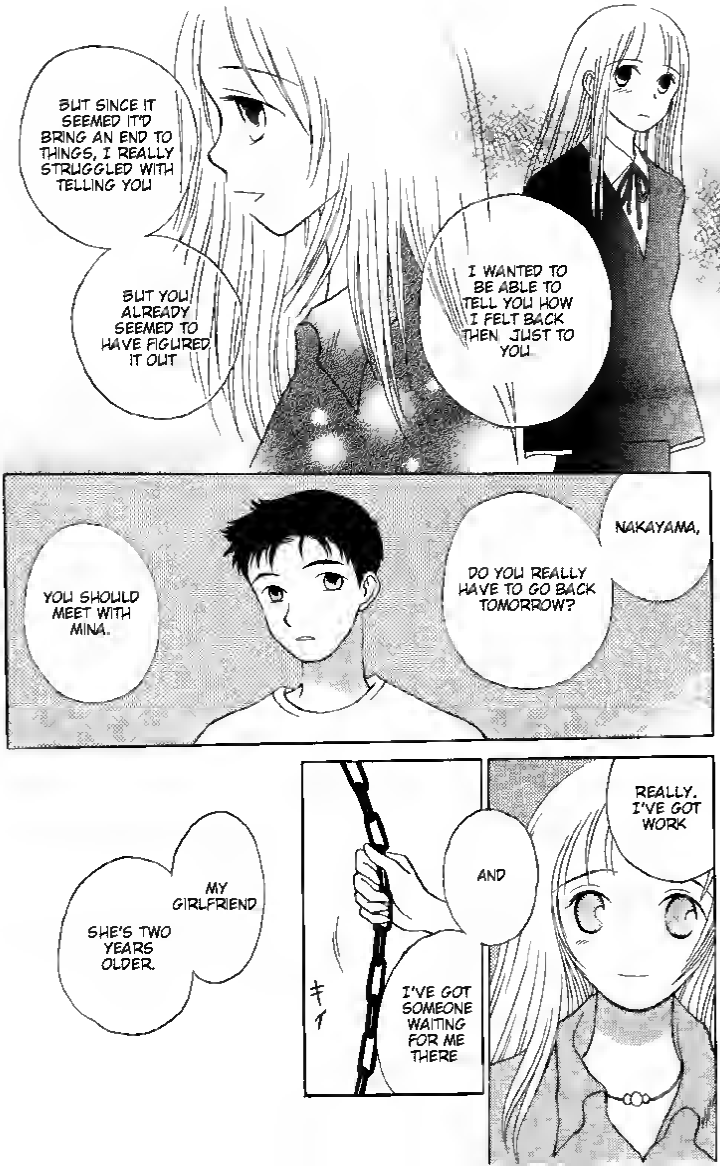
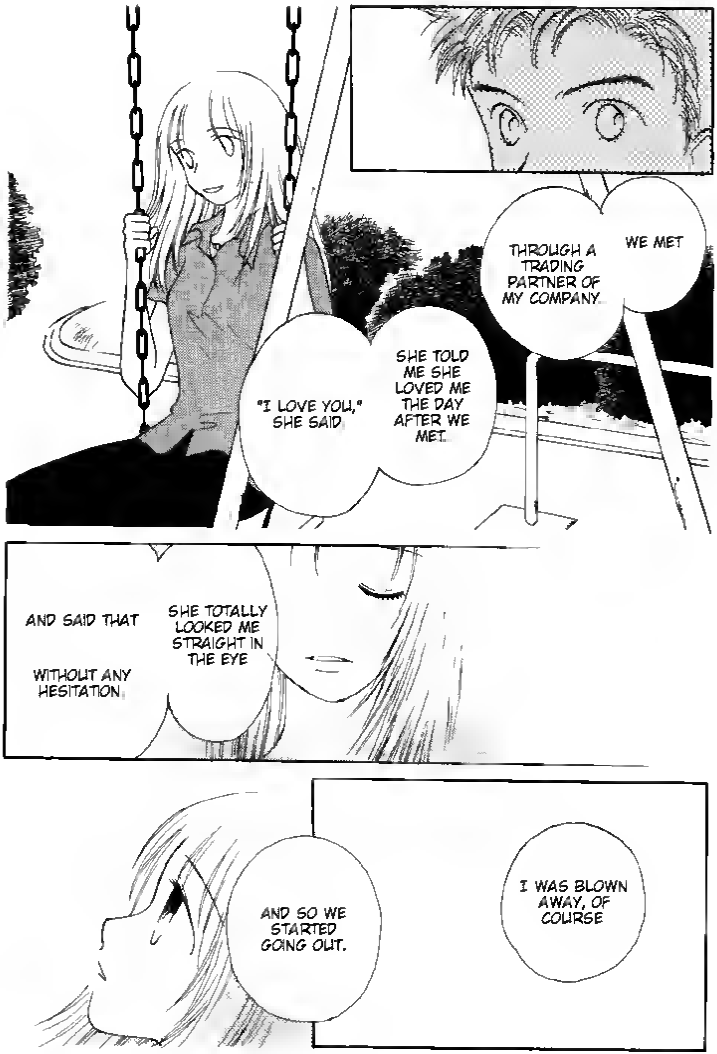

YEAH

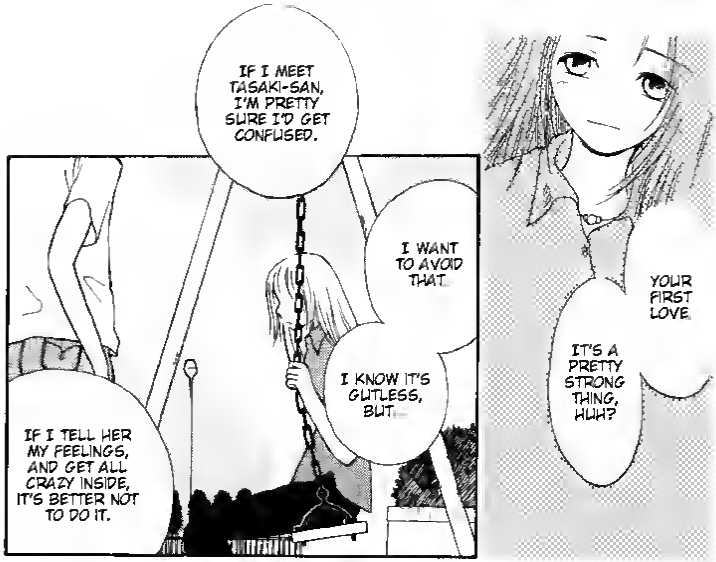

PAINFULLY
JUST BECAUSE YOUR HEART STARTS POUNDING WHEN YOU HOLD HER HAND
TOTALLY
THERE'S NO TELLING
UNABLE TO EXPRESS YOUR EMOTIONS
DEPLORABLY

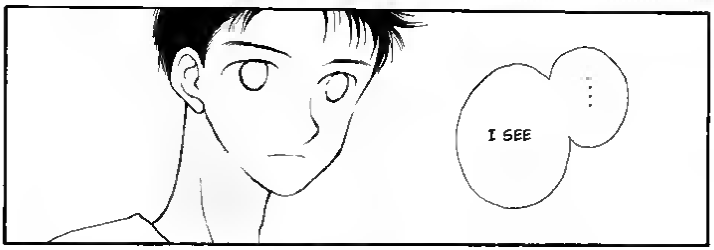

AH, BUT IT'S A BIG RELIEF,
BEING ABLE TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT THIS.
TO TELL THE TRUTH, EVER SINCE I'VE BEEN BACK, I'VE BEEN WANDERING AROUND HERE
I THOUGHT I'D RUN INTO YOU IF YOU WERE BACK IN TOWN.
OF COURSE I KNEW THE TWO OF YOU WERE IN TOKYO
BUT
I WAS HAPPY JUST BEING IN THE SAME PLACE AS HER
EVEN JUST A TINY BIT
I FELT LIKE I WAS INCLUDED IN HER WORLD
THAT'S RIGHT.

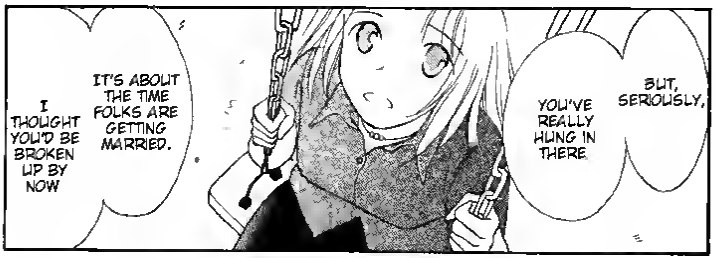

BUT SINCE IT SEEMED IT'D BRING AN END TO THINGS, I REALLY STRUGGLED WITH TELLING YOU
BUT YOU ALREADY SEEMED TO HAVE FIGURED IT OUT
I WANTED TO BE ABLE TO TELL YOU HOW I FELT BACK THEN JUST TO YOU
NAKAYAMA,
DO YOU REALLY HAVE TO GO BACK TOMORROW?
YOU SHOULD MEET WITH MINA.
REALLY. I'VE GOT WORK
AND
I'VE GOT SOMEONE WAITING FOR ME THERE
キィ
MY GIRLFRIEND
SHE'S TWO YEARS OLDER.

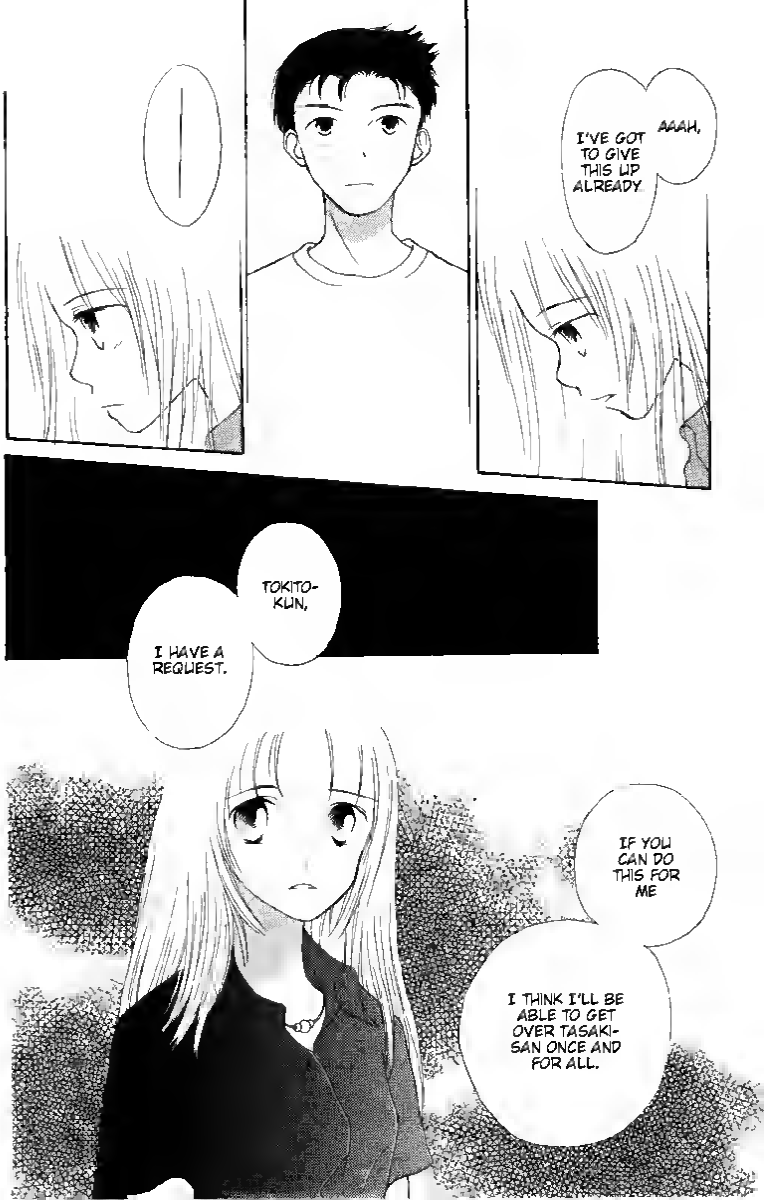

WE MET THROUGH A TRADING PARTNER OF MY COMPANY.
SHE TOLD ME SHE LOVED ME THE DAY AFTER WE MET.
"I LOVE YOU," SHE SAID
SHE TOTALLY LOOKED ME STRAIGHT IN THE EYE
AND SAID THAT
WITHOUT ANY HESITATION.
I WAS BLOWN AWAY, OF COURSE
AND SO WE STARTED GOING OUT.

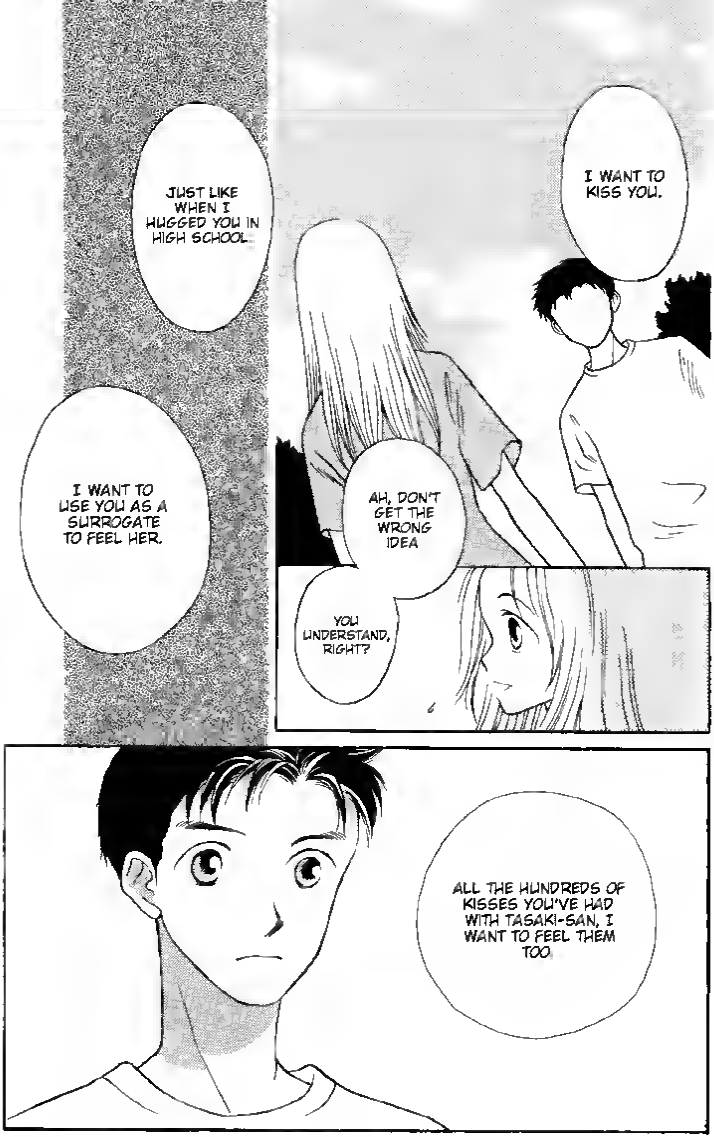
IT'S SO FUNNY.
SHE'S WAY SHORTER THAN I AM, THINNER AND HAS A GORGEOUS BODY,
BUT I'M THE ONE ALWAY LEANING ON HER
EVERY TIME WE MEET, SHE'S ALWAYS TAKING CARE OF ME
SHE REALLY CARES FOR ME.
I'M REALLY HAPPY.
BUT
I JUST CAN'T FORGET TASAKI-SAN.
EVERY TIME SHE TREATS ME SO NICELY
I THINK, "AH, I WISH I COULD BE DOING THIS FOR TASAKI-SAN."
IT MAKES ME DISGUSTED WITH MYSELF.


IF I MEET TASAKI-SAN, I'M PRETTY SURE I'D GET CONFUSED.
I WANT TO AVOID THAT.
I KNOW IT'S GUTLESS, BUT...
IF I TELL HER MY FEELINGS, AND GET ALL CRAZY INSIDE, IT'S BETTER NOT TO DO IT.
YOUR FIRST LOVE.
IT'S A PRETTY STRONG THING, HUH?


I SEE
...

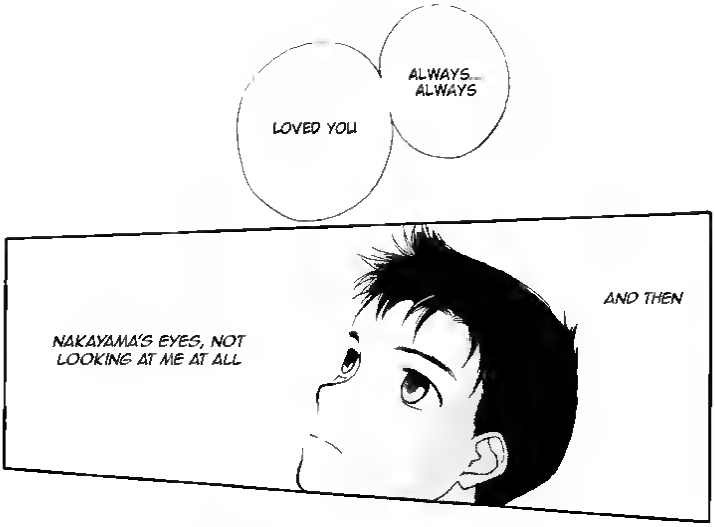

I THOUGHT YOU'D BE BROKEN UP BY NOW
IT'S ABOUT THE TIME FOLKS ARE GETTING MARRIED.
YOU'VE REALLY HUNG IN THERE.
BUT, SERIOUSLY,

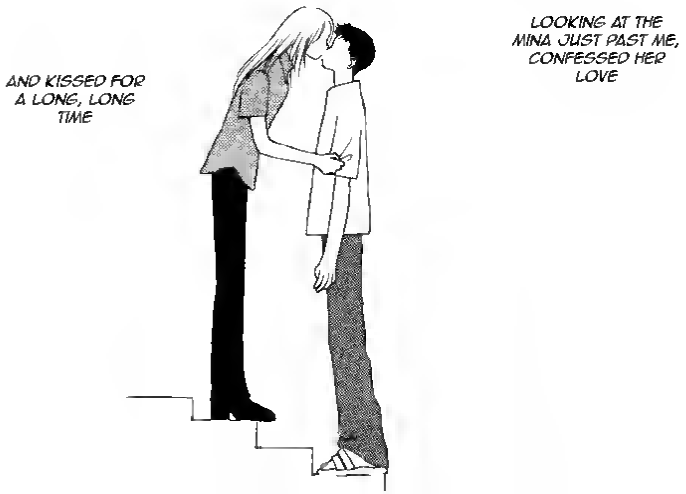

I...
AAAH, I'VE GOT TO GIVE THIS UP ALREADY.
TOKITO-KUN, I HAVE A REQUEST.
IF YOU CAN DO THIS FOR ME
I THINK I'LL BE ABLE TO GET OVER TASAKI-SAN ONCE AND FOR ALL.

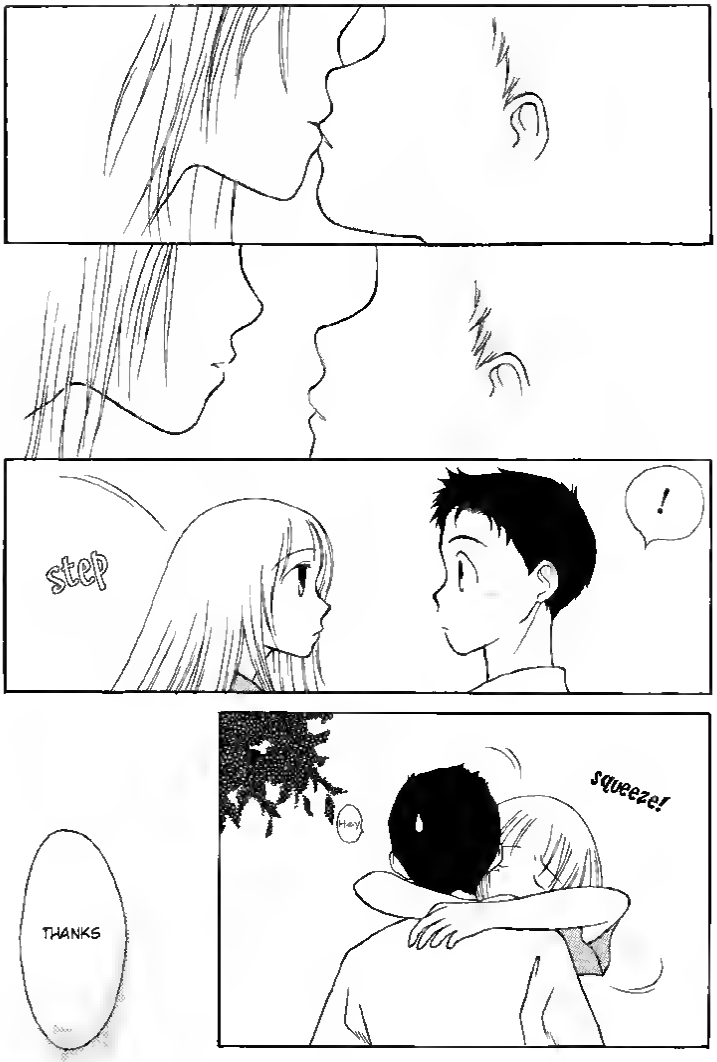

I WANT TO KISS YOU.
AH, DON'T GET THE WRONG IDEA
YOU UNDERSTAND, RIGHT?
JUST LIKE WHEN I HUGGED YOU IN HIGH SCHOOL.
I WANT TO USE YOU AS A SURROGATE TO FEEL HER.
ALL THE HUNDREDS OF KISSES YOU'VE HAD WITH TASAKI-SAN, I WANT TO FEEL THEM TOO.

AH, SURE.
. . . . . .
WELL, EVEN IF YOU'RE HAPPY ABOUT IT,
IT'S JUST A PASS-THROUGH FOR ME
scratch scratch
REALLY?
REALLY? THANKS!
LOOK, I WANT TO KISS TASAKI MINA, OK?
YOU'VE GOT TO POUR EVERY OUNCE OF YOUR BEING INTO CHANNELING HER LIPS.
IT'LL BE A PROBLEM IF YOU TAKE A CASUAL APPROACH LIKE THAT
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT!?

WHAAAA?
YOU'RE WHAT THEY CALL A CONDUIT.
YOU DON'T EXIST FROM THIS POINT ON, GOT IT!?
TOKITO-KUN, YOU STAND THERE.
THE DIFFERENCE IN OUR HEIGHTS IS ABOUT THIS
I'VE ALWAYS


ALWAYS... ALWAYS
LOVED YOU
AND THEN
NAKAYAMA'S EYES, NOT LOOKING AT ME AT ALL

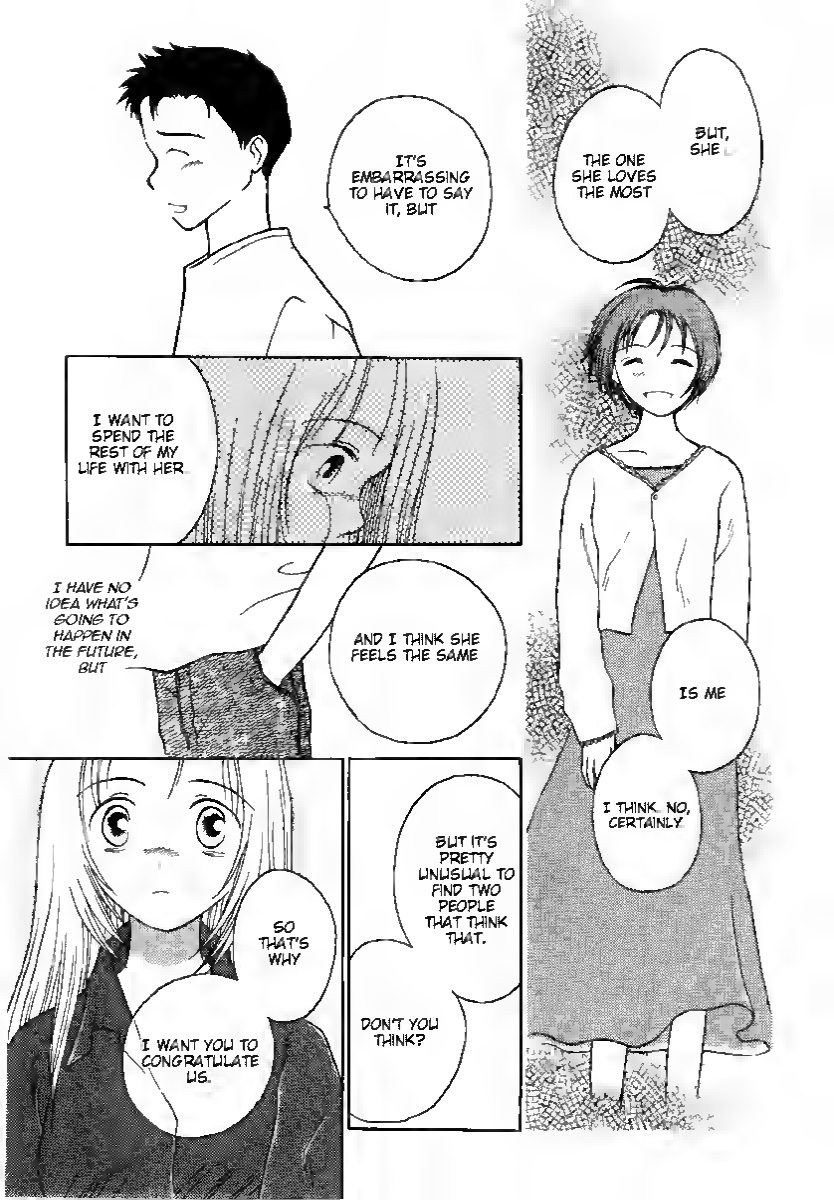

LOOKING AT THE MINA JUST PAST ME, CONFESSED HER LOVE
AND KISSED FOR A LONG, LONG TIME

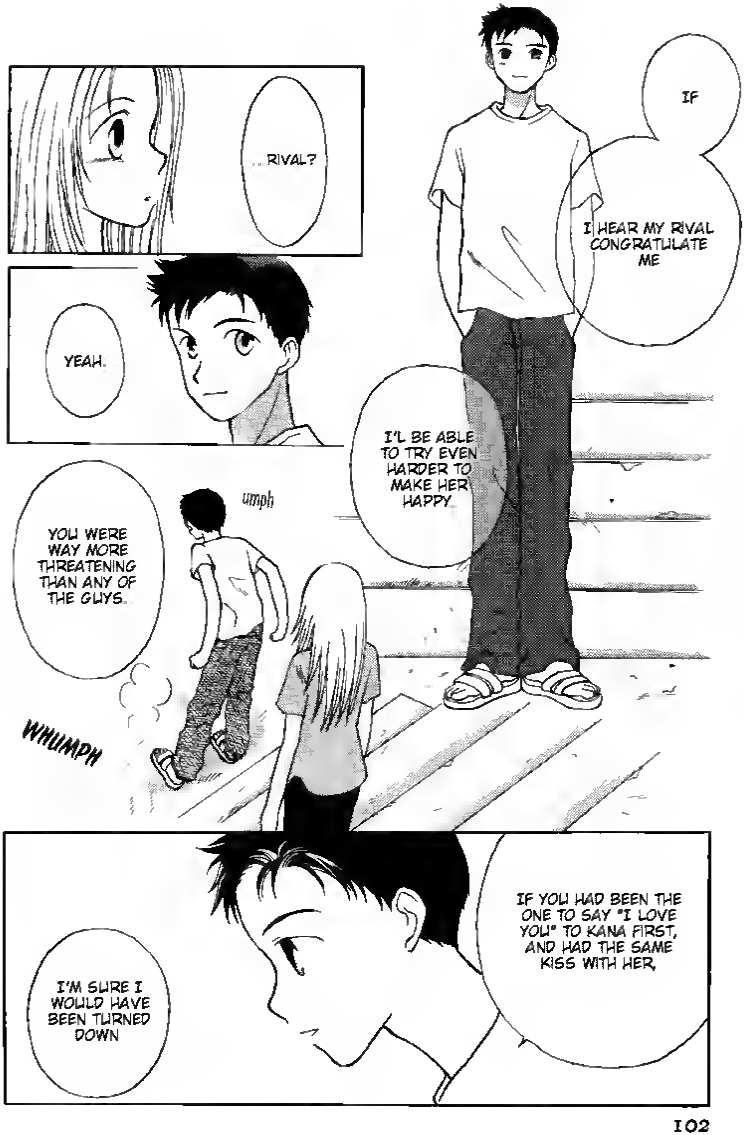

step
!
squeeze!
Hey!
THANKS

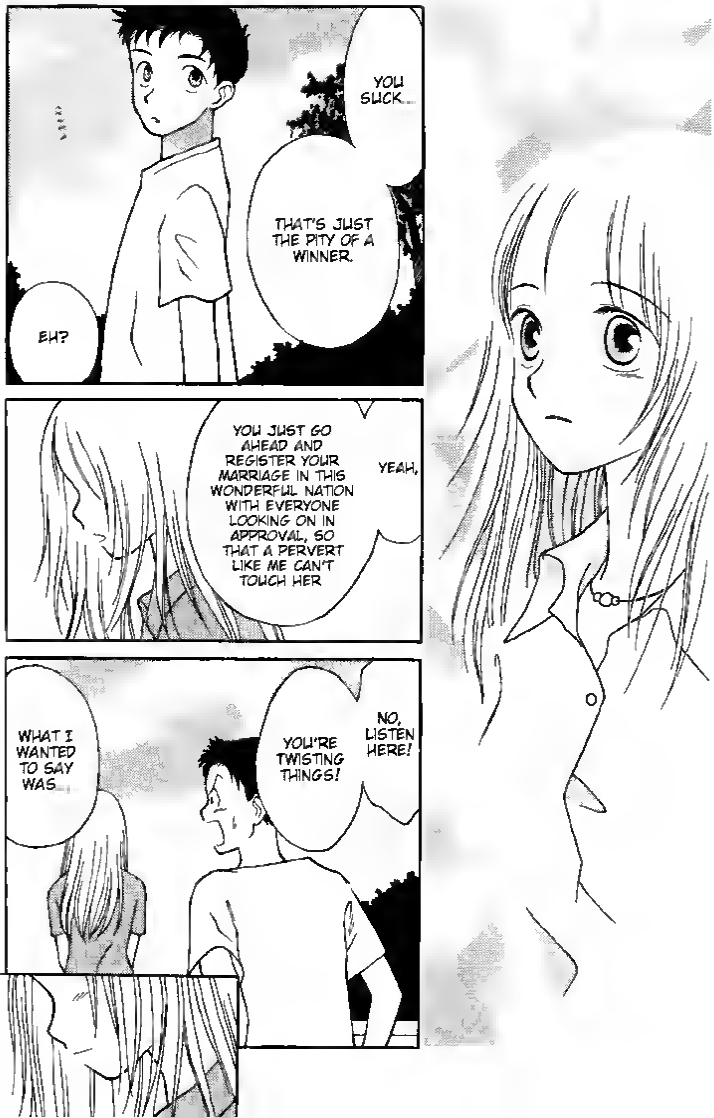
IT WOULD HAVE BEEN GREAT IF TASAKI-SAN HAD STUMBLED UPON US AND GOTTEN THE WRONG IDEA.
We'd both be done for
...AHHH.
HEY, YOU'RE STILL SAYING THAT AFTER THIS?
Didn't you say you'd be able to give up after this?
OK! IT'S TIME.
I'M PUTTING AN END TO THIS,
SO NO PART OF YOUR HOPE REMAINS.
MY DUTY AS A WARRIOR.
I'M GOING TO MARRY MINA.
TOMORROW, WHEN SHE COMES, WE'RE GOING TO SEE BOTH OUR PARENTS.

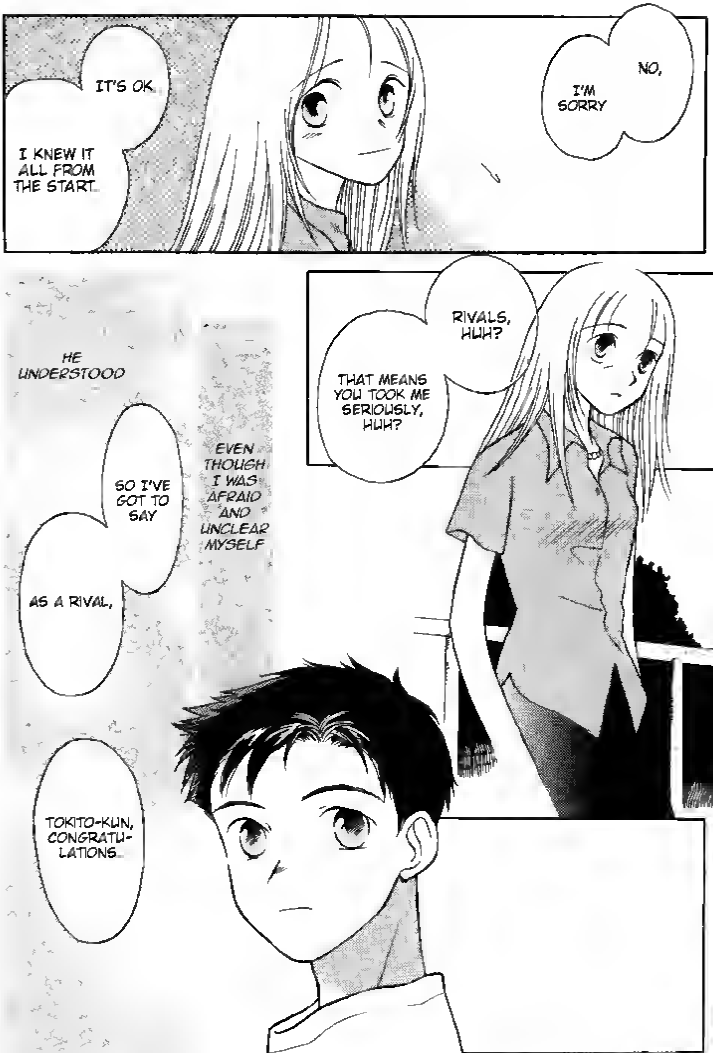
MEAN! UNFAIR...
THAT'S...
NO WAY...
WHAT IS?
I'VE ALWAYS ALWAYS LOVED HER MORE!
AS IF I CARE
NOOO~
DON'T TAKE TASAKI-SAN.
WINNER TAKES THE PRIZE TOO BAD.
IT'S TRUE.
EVEN SO, THAT'S....

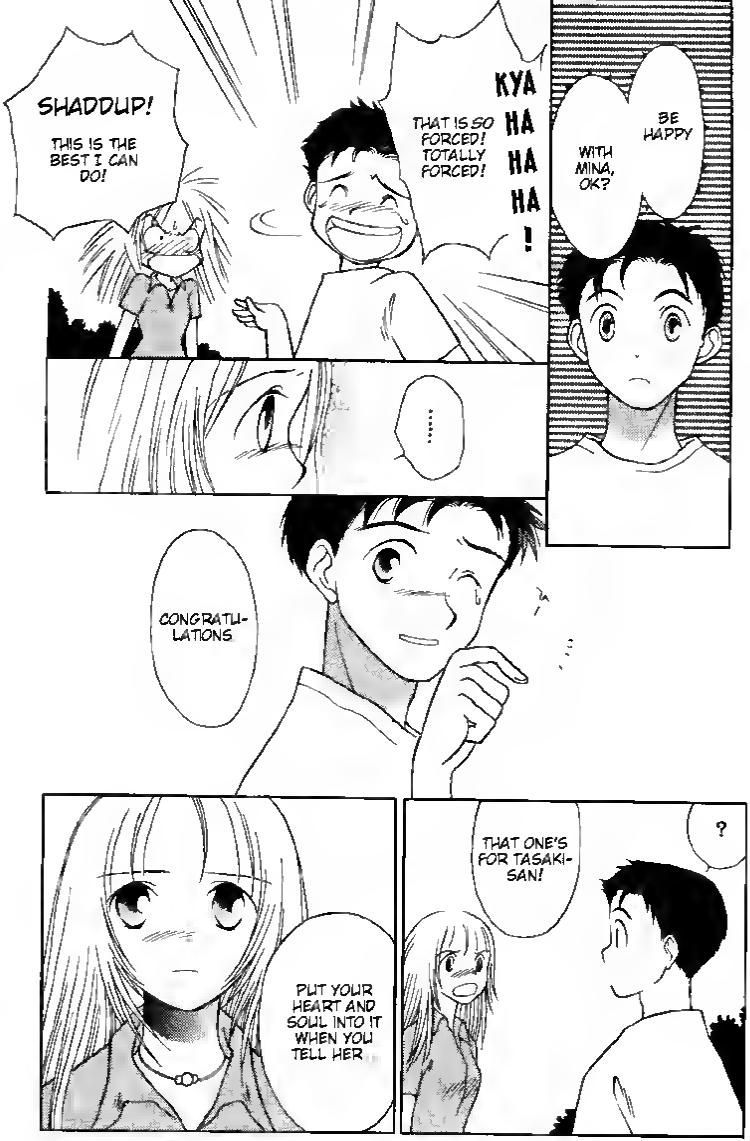
NAKAYAMA, GIVE ME A BREAK.
NAKAYAMA
MINA....
LOOK, I LOVE MINA.
ENOUGH THAT I'M EVEN IMPRESSED MYSELF.
YOU SAID YOU'VE LOVED HER MORE...
AND IT COULD BE TRUE

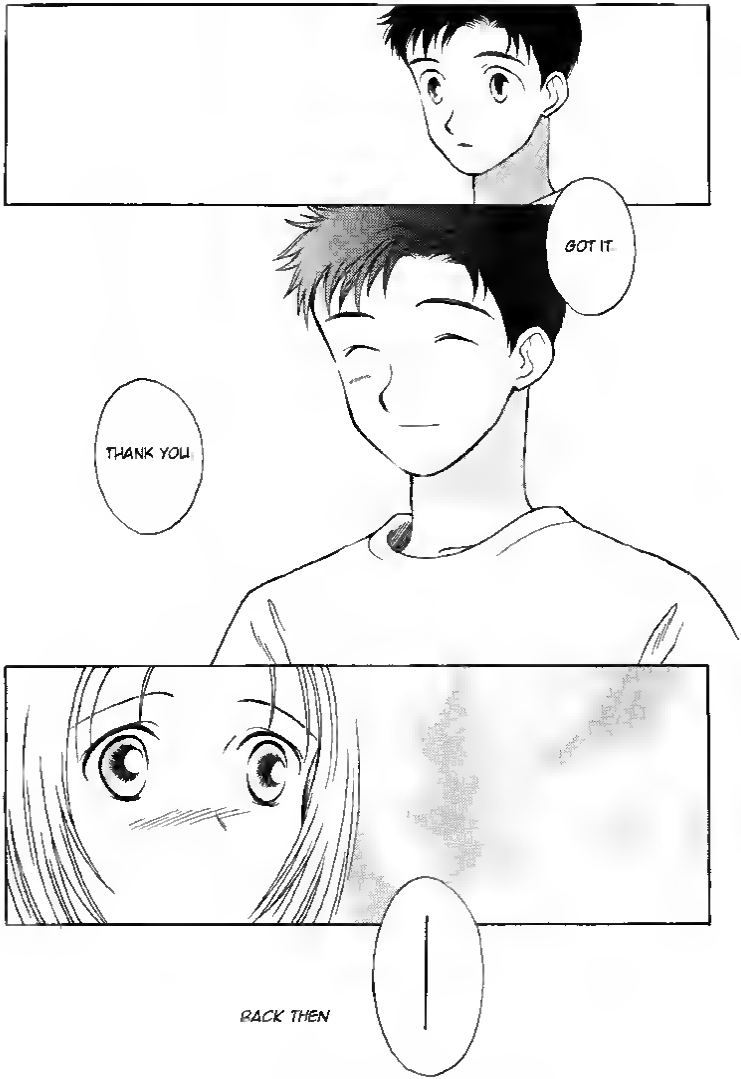

IT'S EMBARRASSING TO HAVE TO SAY IT, BUT
I WANT TO SPEND THE REST OF MY LIFE WITH HER.
I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN IN THE FUTURE, BUT
AND I THINK SHE FEELS THE SAME
BUT, SHE
THE ONE SHE LOVES THE MOST
IS ME
I THINK. NO, CERTAINLY.
BUT IT'S PRETTY UNUSUAL TO FIND TWO PEOPLE THAT THINK THAT.
DON'T YOU THINK?
SO THAT'S WHY
I WANT YOU TO CONGRATULATE US.

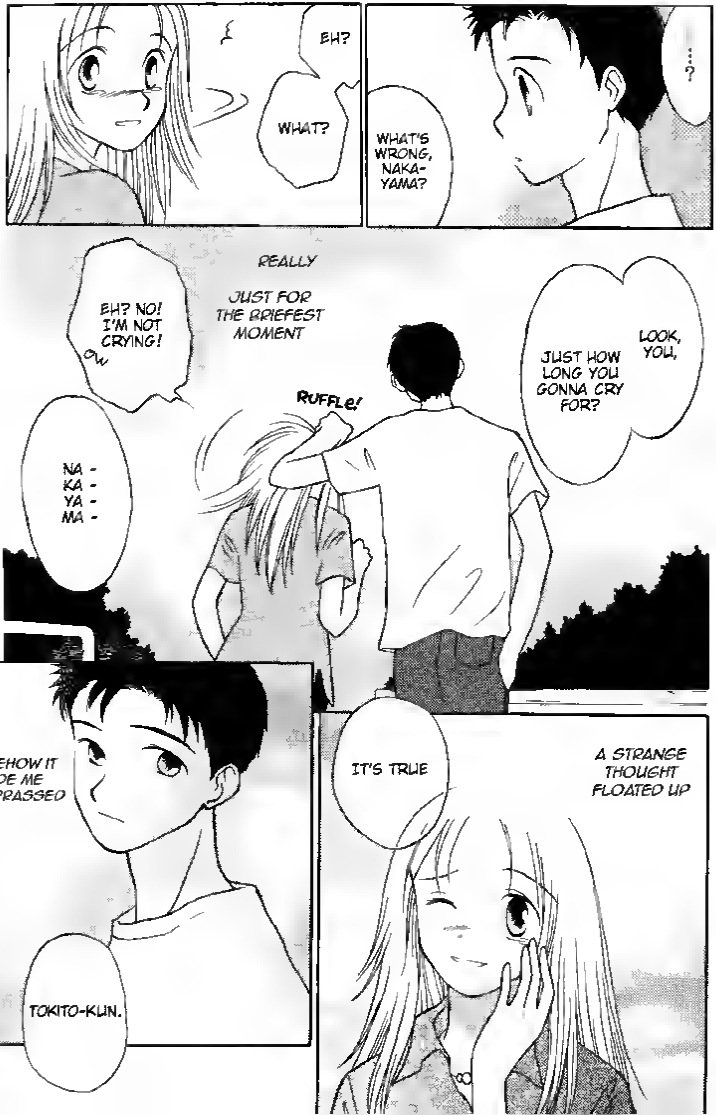

...RIVAL?
YEAH.
IF I HEAR MY RIVAL CONGRATULATE ME
I'LL BE ABLE TO TRY EVEN HARDER TO MAKE HER HAPPY.
umph
YOU WERE WAY MORE THREATENING THAN ANY OF THE GUYS.
WHUMPH
IF YOU HAD BEEN THE ONE TO SAY "I LOVE YOU" TO KANA FIRST, AND HAD THE SAME KISS WITH HER,
I'M SURE I WOULD HAVE BEEN TURNED DOWN


YOU SUCK...
THAT'S JUST THE PITY OF A WINNER.
EH?
YEAH,
YOU JUST GO AHEAD AND REGISTER YOUR MARRIAGE IN THIS WONDERFUL NATION WITH EVERYONE LOOKING ON IN APPROVAL, SO THAT A PERVERT LIKE ME CAN'T TOUCH HER
NO, LISTEN HERE!
YOU'RE TWISTING THINGS!
WHAT I WANTED TO SAY WAS...
Heh

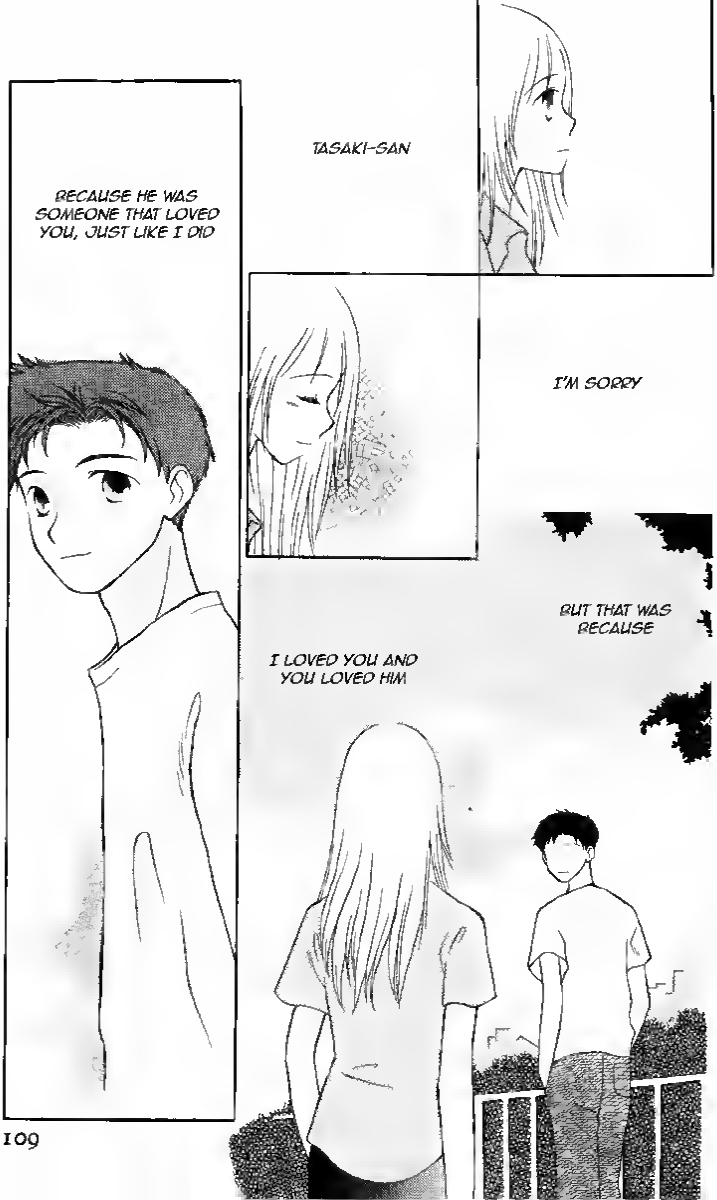

NO, I'M SORRY
IT'S OK. I KNEW IT ALL FROM THE START.
RIVALS, HUH?
THAT MEANS YOU TOOK ME SERIOUSLY, HUH?
HE UNDERSTOOD
EVEN THOUGH I WAS AFRAID AND UNCLEAR MYSELF
SO I'VE GOT TO SAY
AS A RIVAL,
TOKITO-KUN, CONGRATU-LATIONS.

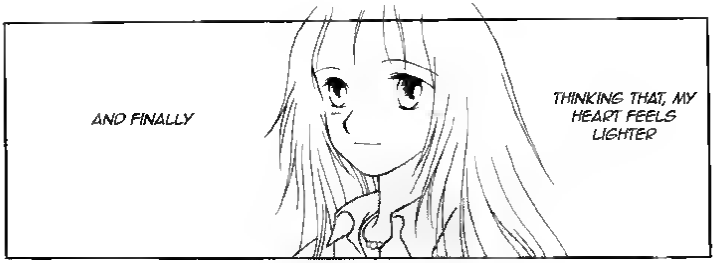

SHADDUP!
THIS IS THE BEST I CAN DO!
THAT IS SO FORCED! TOTALLY FORCED!
KYA HA HA HA!
BE HAPPY WITH MINA, OK?
.....
CONGRATULATIONS
PUT YOUR HEART AND SOUL INTO IT WHEN YOU TELL HER
THAT ONE'S FOR TASAKI-SAN!
?


GOT IT.
THANK YOU.
I
BACK THEN

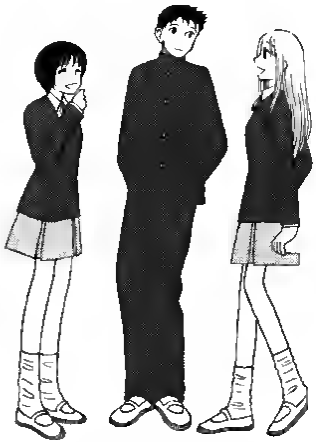

EH?
WHAT?
WHAT'S WRONG, NAKA-YAMA?
...?
REALLY
JUST FOR THE BRIEFEST MOMENT
EH? NO! I'M NOT CRYING!
SOB
RUFFLE!
LOOK, YOU, JUST HOW LONG YOU GONNA CRY FOR?
NA - KA - YA - MA -
SOMEHOW IT MADE ME EMBARRASSED
TOKITO-KUN.
IT'S TRUE
A STRANGE THOUGHT FLOATED UP

BACK IN HIGH SCHOOL
THANKS FOR THAT.
IT REALLY WAS LIKE IT WAS TASAKI-SAN'S LIPS
I LOVED TASAKI-SAN, AND WAS ALWAYS THINKING ABOUT HER
I MEAN ..
UM, WELL I KNOW IT WAS MY IMAGINATION, BUT
oh, shit, I'm
AND AT THE SAME TIME
SO IT WAS LIKE I WAS PASSING IT THROUGH TO YOU?
REALLY?
I LOVED TOKITO-KUN TOO, JUST A LITTLE
YEAH, YEAH.


TASAKI-SAN
BECAUSE HE WAS SOMEONE THAT LOVED YOU, JUST LIKE I DID
I'M SORRY
BUT THAT WAS BECAUSE
I LOVED YOU AND YOU LOVED HIM



I CAN PUT AWAY MY FEELINGS FROM BACK THEN



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TAU BOKE
EDITOR ANON